
Annual Report of the
Medical Officer of Health
to the
Bonsall
Urban District Council.

1975

WIRKSWORTH,
DERBYSHIRE.

18th March, 1926.

*The Chairman and Councillors of the
Urban District Council of Bonsall.*

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit my Annual Report for the year 1925.

Vital Statistics.

Deaths.

During the year there were registered 11 deaths, 4 males and 7 females, which estimating the population according to figures from the Registrar General at 1197, gives a death rate of 9·19 per thousand of the living population. There were two infant deaths which gives an infant mortality of 76·91 per thousand births registered. The average age at death of both sexes combined is 42·5. Three of the deaths occurred outside the district. All the deaths were certified. The death rate is again lower than it was last year when it was 10·81, and it might well have been lower still but for the two infant deaths which were due to congenital causes. The infant mortality is nevertheless lower than last year when it was 125·0 per thousand births registered. The average age at death is a little lower than last year when it was 45·1, in spite of the fact that one of the deaths was over 80, and three were over 70 years of age. There was one death at the school age, a girl of 13 years of age, from pulmonary tuberculosis to which reference will be made later.

Births.

During the year there were registered 25 births, 10 males and 15 females, which estimating the population according to figures from the Registrar General at 1197, gives a birth rate of 20·88 per thousand of the living population. This is a slight increase on last year and is welcome in these days of declining birth rate. Figures from the local registrar give 26 births, 10 males and 16 females, which gives a birth rate of 21·72 per thousand of the living population. There was one illegitimate birth.

Prevalence and Control of Acute Infectious Disease.

During the year there were notified two cases of lobar pneumonia which occurred during the influenza epidemic in February and March. The first case was notified on February 3rd, a little boy aged 3 years, who recovered. The second case was notified on March 24th, a man aged 43 years, which case proved fatal. Cases of pneumonia frequently occur during epidemics of influenza and the toxicity of the disease varies in different localities and in different epidemics. Influenza was widespread over the County at that time and we may be counted fortunate in only having two cases. No other case of acute infectious disease was notified during the year.

Prevalence and Control of Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

No case of pulmonary tuberculosis was notified during the year. One case of tuberculosis of the ankle joint was notified on February 10th, a little boy aged 7 years. Removal was effected to a sanatorium and a complete recovery should ensue. As I stated in my annual report of last year, tuberculosis, in a district such as yours, should be unknown.

Causes of Death.

The causes of death were comprised as follows :— There were 2 from tuberculosis of the respiratory system, 2 from Cancer, 1 from cerebral haemorrhage, 1 from heart disease, 1 from pneumonia, 1 from diseases of pregnancy and parturition, 2 from congenital debility and 1 from other defined diseases. The deaths from tuberculosis of the respiratory system call for comment. The first death occurred in March from tuberculosis of the lungs and was the school girl aged 12 years, referred to in my annual report of last year as being too severe in type for removal to the sanatorium. In that report I also stated the child had recently died. The second death occurred in September, a young woman aged 26 years, who died outside the district, from tuberculosis of the lungs, and whose death was transferred to Bonsall. The two deaths from congenital debility also call for some comment. The first occurred in June, a male infant aged 17 days from inanition since birth. The second case occurred in July, a female infant aged 3 days, from malformation of the throat. Both these deaths were, of course, quite unpreventable. You will recollect that last year there were 2 deaths from premature birth. The only comment to be made on these cases is that they give a somewhat false impression of your infant mortality, this year accounting for the whole infant mortality. The other deaths, with the possible exception of the death from pneumonia already dealt with, call for no comment.

Factories.

There is only one factory in the district, Hollins' Cotton Combing which was duly inspected and found to be in every way satisfactory. There is also the Via Gellia Colour Works for the manufacture of dry paints wherein no lead is contained and only males are employed. These colour works are under the Factory Act.

Sanitary Administration of the District.

The Inspector of Nuisances has carried out his duties throughout the year in a satisfactory manner and all sanitary defects remedied were of a minor character. His report states a sewer is still required in Bell Lane, Upper Town. No houses have been condemned as unfit for human habitation during the year and no new houses have been erected. Scavenging is still carried out by the Council's refuse carts fortnightly. The cost of scavenging for the year was £ 159/18/4 which works out at 10/3 per house. This is again an increase on last year.

There are 37 Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops on the register of which 15 inspections were made and which were found to be satisfactory. The approximate number of cows is 200. The cowhouses were regularly inspected and white-washed and no cows were condemned for tuberculosis. There are no bake-houses. There was one slaughterhouse in use during the year which was inspected and found to be satisfactory. There are no offensive trades or common lodging-houses.

GENERAL STATISTICS :—Area (Acres) 2397; Population (1925) 1197; Number of inhabited houses 312. Number of separate occupiers 312.

(a) Scavenging. Carried out by servants of the local authority. Cost per house per annum, 10/3.

(b) The conversion of privies into pail closets is the present policy of the Council. The rate of progress in this direction is slow.

(c) Housing Accommodation. No new houses were erected during the year. The housing position is much the same as it was last year. There seems no incentive to build, and while, as previously, several houses could be rendered habitable, there is no special demand and no housing problem.

(d) Sanitary Requirements. There is no urgent sanitary requirement. The most important sanitary requirement is a new sanitary arrangement at both schools. I am well aware of the difficulties in effecting this and had it not been for the war we should no doubt have been accommodated by now for a definite promise was then made to me that the matter would be taken in hand. I have been repeating this need of improvement for several years now.

(e) There are no noteworthy conditions prejudicial to the health of the district.

(f) No special action has been taken during the year to improve the health of the district.

Water Supply.

The water supply is ample in quantity and excellent in quality and during the somewhat dry summer no shortage was experienced.

Schools.

Your Schools were duly inspected by me as School Medical Officer and I am again pleased to say their condition remains in every way satisfactory. I hope that this year will see some action taken with regard to the sanitary arrangements at both Schools, particularly at the Church Schools. The Schools were not closed during the year. The condition of the children themselves is excellent.

In conclusion, Gentlemen, you are to be congratulated on the healthy sanitary condition of your district, which is evidenced by your low death rate and complete freedom from infectious or zymotic disease though I would urge that we should not be satisfied and feel that nothing remains to be done, but should seize upon this opportunity of well-being and freedom from care to further strengthen our sanitation and consider what still can be accomplished. Here I would wish to mention the ever-growing importance of the School Health Week and ask you to bear in mind that a more enlightened generation is growing up, ever more critical of such matters.

I have the honour to remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

ARTHUR G. HARVEY,

Medical Officer of Health.

